

BCB S P R I N G SEMESTER 2023

FA304 Merging Photo with the Book Form

Seminar Leader: April Gertler

Course Time: Fridays: 2 - 5.15pm

Email: a.gertler@bard.berlin.edu

Mobile: +49 177 617 1652 (iMessage / WhatsApp / Signal)

Office Hours: by appointment - Fridays: 14 - 17.15pm

Course Description

The historical relationship between the photograph and the book form goes very far back. This photography class will look at how the book form as a time-based structural format can support the photograph and the photographic sequence. A book is an object, and its very properties cannot be approached without considering its content. The two-part class will loosely explore the structures of 4-6 different book forms (including; the 8-fold, the single signature, the 'Zine', the perfect bind, and the accordion fold) while examining how a photographic sequence can use the form to its best advantage.

Each assignment will explore a book form in combination with an exploration of a photographic narrative.

Each student will leave the class with a mini-library of their very own artist books. Although the class will be challenging, it is open to all students, and no prior experience with photography is necessary, however it's a bonus. Digital and vernacular photography will be the photographic focus.

Requirements

Students are expected to:

- Turn off phones during class unless otherwise asked.
- If students want to use the darkroom, they are required to use the designated and assigned printing times given to each student at the beginning of the semester.
- Be prepared to present artworks / assignments / presentations without reminder.
- Engage in critiques and discussions.
- Initiate appointments with the Professor or arts staff outside of class time when assistance is necessary.
- Always allocate extra time for work preparation and clean-up for independent production.
- Respond to emails and/or text messages from the Professor in a timely manner.
- Inform Professor at beginning of semester if photos of student, artwork, works in progress are NOT to be taken and / or used for Bard College Berlin.
- Remove all artworks, art materials, and any personal belongings before the final inspection of the arts spaces during completion week. Failure to remove works and / or clean spaces used will result in final grade penalisation. Donating artworks or art materials (unrequested) at anytime is not permitted and will still be considered student's property that will be expected to be uninstalled and removed.

- Students are expected to purchase 36 exposure Black and White film and photographic paper as needed for class assignments throughout the semester if needed

Attendance and Special considerations for Spring 2023:

Some students might need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

- Attendance of ALL classes is expected.
- More than one absence (that is, absence from one three-hour session per week) in a semester will affect the participation grade for the course.
- Students are expected to attend all off-campus classes punctually, from start to finish. If there is a scheduling/travel conflict, the Professor must be informed in advance.
- Tardiness after five minutes will be considered an absence unless the Professor is contacted at least 1/2 an hour before class via text or email.

Policy on Late Submission of Artworks / Presentations

Assignments (artworks, essays, oral presentations) that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (Example: B+ becomes C+). Professor is not obliged to accept assignments that are more than 24 hours late. Where the Professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it must be submitted within two weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C.

Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grade Breakdown

This class is based on the simple principle of doing the best you can in class.

That means; handing your work in on time, coming to class on time, participating in class and cleaning / maintaining the darkroom and finally, being prepared and ready when in class.

Sister Corita Kent, both artists, wrote a very apt list titled:

10 RULES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS.

I follow this list quite closely.

Rule Number 7 says; The only rule is work. If you work it will lead to something. It is the people who do all the work all the time who eventually catch to things.

You can fool the fans — but not the players.

Keep this in mind during this class.

Although you are needed to be in class to get grades or pass the course — much more importantly you are needed to help make the class. The structure is there for you and you also are the structure; your contributions help shape the class.

Here is a breakdown of percentages for each component listed

50% handing work in on time

40% cleaning / maintaining darkroom

30% coming to class on time

30% participating in class

... that's 150%.

In fact, that's what I want you to give to this class.

Assessment

Students are also assessed on their ability to work independently and responsibly. They will be graded on their ability to communicate with the Professor as well as amongst themselves. This also includes their ambition to create artworks as well as their willingness to budget their time for all requirements connected to this class. This assessment also includes preparation, production, and cleaning up of spaces used at P98 at Bard College Berlin.

Anticipated Costs for this Class

Each student will be expected to either purchase their own film and paper for this class, or print their digital images at local shops like DM or Rossmann. Found materials will be a big part of the class.

SPRING 2023 WEEKLY SCHEDULE*

*There may be adjustments to the timing of assignments as course progresses. All students will be informed of any new expectations and/or deadlines. It is the sole responsibility of each student to be in charge of getting their own film developed at the lab close to campus:

Please plan accordingly: this class requires a minimum of 5+ hours for the assignments.

February 3: Week 1

Introductions, expectations, and rules. Assignment of printing times in the darkroom.
Introduction to the various book forms. Show and tell of handmade artist books.
Introductions with the first pre-assignment!

February 10: Week 2

Assignment #1 (due 18 Feb): The Self-Portrait Narrative

Go to a photoautomat somewhere in Berlin (here is a map of various automats in the city: <http://www.photoautomat.de/standorte.html>) and make 3 self-portrait photographic narratives in the photo booth. Each strip is a series of 4 images so you will have to plan ahead. It will cost €3 for a strip of black and white photographs - bring coins with you.

February 17: Week 3

Assignment #1 due!

Critique and discussion about the photographic narrative.

Assignment #2: The Signature

Due March 4

In class: The introduction to the Signature

In class part one: Exchange the Self-Portrait Narrative strips with each other

What's due: 6 books - 3 originals and 3 copies

February 24: Week 4

Please bring Part One of Assignment #2 to class

2 books + 1 copy

Critique

March 3: Week 5

Due: Assignment #2 : Critique

Presentation of **Assignment #3 - Due 1 April: The COLORFUL Accordion**

The book must be at least 8 pages long

The book must be able to stand up on its own

The book should have a front and back side

This book form will be explored by using the concept of color.

How can color be explored? What are the multiple ways that color can be considered?
Please choose one color and think about how to use the book format to explore the concepts/ideas/thoughts/inspirations behind your color.

Slide show for inspiration. Assigned readings.

The demo on the book form will take place next week - then you can bring in paper that you might want to use for your book.

Due 10 March:

Color presentation by each student on their color:

Inspirations (at least 3) music, art, food, dance, theater, literature, poetry, etc

2 Artists who you have been looking at

Show us the structure of your book so far

10 - 15 min presentation by each student

Assignment #3 (due 1 April): The Accordion & The COLOR

Demo on how to create an accordion book

March 10: Week 6

First check in of Assignment #3

There will be time to work in class on Assignment #3

Critique

March 17: Week 7

Second check in of Assignment #3

There will be time to work in class on Assignment #3

Critique

March 24: Week 8

Third check in of Assignment #3

There will be time to work in class on Assignment #3

Critique

March 31: Week 9

Assignment #3 Due TODAY!

Critique

Introduction of Assignment #4 (due: April 22): The Coptic Fruit

Demo on how to do the Coptic Stitch

Using this book form, please make a book that is a manual for something.

The 'something' can be as banal as putting on your socks, or it can be conceptual about, for example, how to find happiness.

Slide show for inspiration.

April 8: Week 10

Artist book presentation by Julia Fabricius from kraterbooks: <https://kraterbooks.com/about>

SPRING BREAK: 3 April - 7 April

Spring Break Assignment #4: Due April 22!

April 14: Week 11

Introduction of Assignment #5 (due: May 13): Dual Resonance

Any Material - Your Content

Make a book out of any material you choose except paper - the concept of the material should match the content of the book

You can use any of the book structures you have learned up until now, or you can use this method:

Single Sheet Binding- which is a particularly good binding structure for heavier weight materials

Considering that the material of something (in a book form) can alter our viewing experience. How can the material manifest a deeper meaning of the content you have chosen to focus on?

Slide show for inspiration.

April 21: Week 12

Pages from your current project: **Dual Resonance**, are presented today to show how it is going so far.

Presentation must include:

material chosen and why

book form and why

a few of the pages you have created so far

ideas about the content should be presented as well

10 - 15 min for each presentation.

Time to work in class on this project.

April 28: Week 13

Field trip to Einbuch Haus: <https://einbuch.haus/en/#uber-uns>

Meet in class and we will go to the location together - it is near the S-Bahn Pankow station!

Your page for the ARTZINE is DUE TODAY via email.

That should include:

A4 format - portrait

Include an image or a collection of images

Your name and the image or book titles on the page you submit

The page should be scanned at 300dpi if possible, and saved and sent to me as a JPG:

a.gertler@berlin.bard.edu

May 5: Week 14

Assignment #5 DUE TODAY!

Final Critique!

IMMACULATE HEART COLLEGE ART DEPARTMENT RULES

- Rule 1 FIND A PLACE YOU TRUST AND THEN TRY TRUSTING IT FOR A WHILE.
- Rule 2 GENERAL DUTIES OF A STUDENT:
PULL EVERYTHING OUT OF YOUR TEACHER.
PULL EVERYTHING OUT OF YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS.
- Rule 3 GENERAL DUTIES OF A TEACHER:
PULL EVERYTHING OUT OF YOUR STUDENTS.
- Rule 4 CONSIDER EVERYTHING AN EXPERIMENT.
- Rule 5 BE SELF DISCIPLINED. THIS MEANS FINDING SOMEONE WISE OR SMART AND CHOOSING TO FOLLOW THEM.
TO BE DISCIPLINED IS TO FOLLOW IN A GOOD WAY.
TO BE SELF DISCIPLINED IS TO FOLLOW IN A BETTER WAY.
- Rule 6 NOTHING IS A MISTAKE. THERE'S NO WIN AND NO FAIL. THERE'S ONLY MAKE.
- Rule 7 The only rule is work.
IF YOU WORK IT WILL LEAD TO SOMETHING.
IT'S THE PEOPLE WHO DO ALL OF THE WORK ALL THE TIME WHO EVENTUALLY CATCH ON TO THINGS.
- Rule 8 DON'T TRY TO CREATE AND ANALYSE AT THE SAME TIME. THEY'RE DIFFERENT PROCESSES.
- Rule 9 BE HAPPY WHENEVER YOU CAN MANAGE IT. ENJOY YOURSELF. IT'S LIGHTER THAN YOU THINK.
- Rule 10 "WE'RE BREAKING ALL OF THE RULES. EVEN OUR OWN RULES. AND HOW DO WE DO THAT? BY LEAVING PLENTY OF ROOM FOR X QUANTITIES." JOHN CAGE

HELPFUL HINTS: ALWAYS BE AROUND. COME OR GO TO EVERYTHING. ALWAYS GO TO CLASSES. READ ANYTHING YOU CAN GET YOUR HANDS ON. LOOK AT MOVIES CAREFULLY, OFTEN. SAVE EVERYTHING-IT MIGHT COME IN HANDY LATER.
THERE SHOULD BE NEW RULES NEXT WEEK.

If anyone wants to use the darkroom for this class:

Photo Darkroom Facilities

Platanenstrasse 98

** Guidelines given during orientation

Facility Policies: The Factory – Eichenstrasse 43

- 1) The BCB "Factory" (main arts building) has space and facilities available to BCB students with an academic purpose for using the building. Any space in the building, private or shared, cannot be used unless permission has been granted. Any questions relating to this must be addressed to the Director of Studios Arts.
- 2) Chip access to the building will only be granted to those students currently registered for classes using the factory (after add-drop), and that have been offered orientation.
- 3) No smoking is allowed anywhere inside the building. There are to be no projects using open flames (such as candles, torches, lanterns, fireworks, etc.) inside any part of the building.
- 4) Fire exits and lanes (black-taped areas) must be kept clear of any obstructions.
- 5) No spray-painting inside of the building. This also includes any strong, odorous materials (with or without spray). All production involving odorous material is to be done outside the building.
- 6) All work surfaces (table and floor) must always be protected with thick plastic or cardboard. If production is to happen outside, ground / concrete is also to be protected.
- 7) Food must be always cleaned up and removed immediately. Any food used for an art project requiring refrigeration must be labeled with one's name, and disposed of after presentation. All food must be disposed of in lidded trash cans.
- 8) All students are to always be respectful of other student artworks and personal property.
- 9) No art projects may function as weapons, or potentially cause bodily harm.
- 10) No sandals, flip-flops, or bare feet will be allowed inside or around the workshop areas, which includes walking through the workshop. This includes dance and theater students as well.
- 11) Students should always wear adequate protection (goggles, gloves, dust masks, etc.) when needed. BCB will always try to provide these items.
- 12) If you are uncertain how to use a tool or piece of equipment or require assistance, please ask for assistance (by appointment, if necessary).
- 13) Students must be aware of who else is working in the building after dark. Any curfews established by Bard College Berlin must be respected. Finishing production and cleaning up must happen before the curfew time.
- 14) Students must make sure all lights are turned off and doors are closed when leaving the building. No windows or doors are to be left opened or cracked. All electrical items must be unplugged when not in use.

- 15) Any unidentified property left in any common space is subject to either be taken or thrown out, without restitution. All private property **MUST** be labeled and stored in its proper location.
- 16) All workshop items must be returned to the workshop when not in use.
- 17) Any items leaving the building without permission will be considered stolen, and access to the factory may be suspended for the rest of the semester. If an item must be borrowed for a purpose outside of the building, contact the arts staff, and be prepared to leave your Student ID as a deposit. Fines may be charged for late return.
- 18) All students must respect signage posted in the factory that may involve rules that are not mentioned in this document. This includes signage indicating reserved spaces where communal use is restricted.
- 19) There are to be no architectural changes to studios or any areas inside or outside of the building without first speaking with your Professor, Studio Arts Manager, or Director of Studio Arts. When repainting any walls that need restoration, please consult with arts staff beforehand.
- 20) During completion week, any space used by a student must be returned empty with clean walls and floors. All garbage must be bagged (or boxed) and properly disposed of. All students must accept the penalty of grades being affected and / or fines imposed if items are left (or renovations unfinished) by the inspection deadline.

1. Contact AV Manager: Janina Schabig with questions: j.schabig@berlin.bard.edu